TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

In This Issue

Dr. John B. Barnes, who writes about local church's influence in community rovement (Page 1) is director of the reau of Educational Research and Serv- at the Arizona State College, Tempe. was formerly assistant director of the partment of Community Development at thern Illinois University and is an lt education specialist whose immedi- concern is helping communities solve l problems.

Richard O. Comfort, Executive Director the National Council of Churches' De- tment of Town and Country Church, unts some of his recent observations conditions in West Pakistan—Page 5.

Benson Y. Landis has responded to re- sts of some of his friends that he write recollections of the church and coun- life movement and related matters. He s these "Notes on Recollections"—Page He has undertaken this writing because is one of the relatively few persons who w the "first generation" of the group t began to be active about fifty years .

Lonnie H. Hass presents on Page 10 an- er article on making a Religious Cen- He is director of the Town and Coun- Church Department of the Indiana istian Missionary Association, 836 Kess- Boulevard, Indianapolis.

Robert W. Thatcher, a Baptist minister Campbell, Minnesota, describes the stern Minnesota Cooperative Parish on e 12.

The Little Red Hen (Page 13) is con- uted by Mrs. George Corliss who lives a farm in southern Vermont, near the ssachusetts border.

No. 126
September, 1957

The Local Church: A Force or a Farce in Community Improvement

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OF RELIGION

JOHN B. BARNES

• The significance of this subject is largely determined by the degree of acceptance which one gives to a basic, underlying premise. The receptive mind need not be a sponge, absorbing all; it should be penetrable like a sieve, straining and selecting according to its own standards. The closed mind belongs to a hard person and, like rock, it is changed very little except as it is crushed by overpowering forces. The writer humbly admits that this presentation is not powerful enough to measurably affect the closed mind. Likewise it may be dangerous when picked up like a sponge. The critical and selective person can find some meat, much broth, and as his own pantry is stocked, he can either sip, supper, or feast!

Basic Premise

The basic premise is this: The local church has a responsibility for the development of whole, mature people and for providing a fit setting for continued individual growth. It should be added quickly that this is not the sole, or necessarily the foremost, responsibility of the church. The more obvious and specific duties need not be be-labored.

On the one hand, this premise insists that a person believe in the inseparable nature of ideals and moral laws, of principles and applications, of Religion and God. It is foolish to assume that a person can have ideals, principles, and a religion without doctrinal-guideposts, some tangible expression of his faith, and an awareness of God. In fact, it is as foolish as assuming that a country can have a government without law, or a person can have wisdom without facts.

On the other hand, the premise insists that the local church with the minister in its pulpit, the open scriptures on its altar, and its doctrine fixed in each communicant's mind, is merely garbed and girded for its job. A sleeping workman, with kindness in his heart, skills in his hands, and tools at his side, builds nothing. The local church can resemble a timid giant, in that its overt behavior often is no real indication of its power.

Narrowed down, we can say that the church has a responsibility for the development of its community. The vitality of each local church can be measured in direct ratio to its constructive alteration of its human, social, and physical environment, that is individuals, groups, and conditions. Thus it seems that a church set amid slums, disease, graft, lethargy, intolerance, has a tremendous job to do—a job which demands a thorough ministry and witness. The church cannot hope to minister broadly unless it thinks of its role broadly. Sin is not eradicated by improving one's pulpit style; community harmony and trust is not produced by church newsletters; gambling and intoxication are not stamped out by organ recitals—it is the broad ministry of the local church that possesses the power to create a Christian climate.

Like timid giants, churches in many communities are seeking to make men Christlike; hundreds of other forces do not share this noble intention. In many communities these forces heavily offset the pulpit's pleas. Church choirs are muffled by the rush to recreation spots on Sunday morning.

The setting of the church—the local community—either nourishes and stimulates or neglects and stiffles Christian growth. The church that fails to recognize this impact which

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(*Continued from Page* 1)

"community" has on people cannot hope to meet the complex challenge of Protestantism today.

Community Needs Are Church Challenges

When you admit that the church is not solely a purveyor of glad tidings, you are confronted with an obvious and an ancient problem. Jesus faced it in assuming that bad government corrupts people, that blind ritualism dwarfs the soul, that judging one's neighbors without facts breeds false idealism. The problem is: "Where can the local church best serve to build a mature community?" The question is not: "How far should my church go?" or "Is that our business?" The "distance" question is relative and unanswerable except after much specific study. The "business" question reminds me of the one-legged frog. He couldn't jump but he could make beautiful circles. Going around in little circles, separating the inseparable, was all right for that frog because he was deformed. The dynamic, living church builds no compartments in life; it is concerned about both sin and smog, liturgy and lethargy.

Today the American community is in trouble. First, let's look at the small community. For decades we have been in an urban swing. Most small communities have lost population; some have suffered startling decline and others have simply eroded away by a slow and unseen process. We have yet to note the full effect of such a trend. The out-migration has occurred chiefly among the age group 18-26 years. The small community's loss is further complicated by a qualitative factor—many men and women entering the skills and professions have fought their way out of the small town. They may never return.

Meanwhile the "hometown" fights bear with a broomstick! Problems which demand the vision and consecration of dedicated young people keep turning up. There on the surface they lie, hard-baked by human neglect. Misplaced manpower permits such problems to gain a foothold, then to become deeply entrenched, practically insolvable. Even the homespun idealism which marked the small town for nearly a century is being weakened.

The seamy side—poor housing, an inordinate ratio of the elderly, weak municipal facilities, inadequate school programs, stranded churches, low pay scales or sidewalks dotted with the unemployed—this is an accurate picture of many of our small towns today.

What about the centers of heavy population? The urban shift becomes necessary partly because city birth rates are not normally high enough to maintain, much less, increase themselves. Warren writes: "Roughly half of the rural youth migrate to the city." The city is replenished, staffed, and even fed by resources outside itself; in a sense, it is made up of displaced persons. Is a city then a community? Is it many communities?

A truly integrated community is one which possesses a functional interdependence kept alive by aerated communication channels. These channels range from the formal, such as the free press, to the informal, such as neighborhood ear-bending.

A complex human ecology in the city creates a fragmented environment of citizens huddled together for survival. Often it is a survival of imposed interdependence. The individual is absorbed into a mass of formal and informal activity; he loses personal and small group identity. We see the result in numerous areas of life: In recreation, spectator sports are held amid vast parking lots or on television screens in one's living room. In housing, an anonymity of appearance leads to a colorless collection of residences bordered by transportation systems, precinct lines, or high social walls.

Many cities are attempting to become real communities. Block or neighborhood organization, citizen's study groups and councils, area redevelopment programs, urban renewal projects are seeking to refurbish both physical and human environment. Kempfer believes that rather phenomenal increases in adult education participation are partly a result of the need for greater human association in urban settings. Mayo and Drucker have analyzed the urban industrial scene in terms of its fierce impact upon human inter-relationships.

In our urban settings, the oven in our nation's kitchen, some of our finest churches are found. The challenge here is parallel in importance to that in the small community.

Leadership, Objectivity, and Coordination

There are three key needs present in most communities today which the church is uniquely suited to help satisfy. Those three needs greatly determine the kind of community setting in which the church sows its seeds. It is here that the church can best serve to build a strong, vital local community.

The finest hybrid seed, sown skillfully at the proper season by the farmer, grows according to the favor which many elements (soil, water, air, etc.) give it. The farmer plants the seed; he cannot hope to control all of the elements. The local church, like the tiller of our soil, plants seeds. The community elements affect the growth of the plant. The church, like the modern farmer, aims to do much more than sow seeds. It hopes to condition the community, to best enable each seed to grow, bloom, and produce.

Let us then think of these community needs as elements which the church can condition. *First, the element of leadership.* To paraphrase Clemenceau: "This is a war that is too important to be left up to generals." The small community has been stripped of much of its leadership. Urban trends are pulling many of the dynamic folk away from the small towns, leaving a high per cent of the tired and the retired. Yet the element of leadership alone makes the difference between one town and another, makes the difference in living with a problem or solving it.

The timid giants hear their children say, "It's hard for a Christian to go into politics," or "The trouble with taking the job of school board

chairman is that it would affect my business."

Leadership is like sunlight; it is essential to community growth. Without leadership the community yellows, wilts, and crumbles. The local church is responsible for the condition of its community's leadership.

A second element is objectivity. The community that can look at itself clearly and objectively is on the road to improvement. Objectivity is not merely a matter of looking in one's mirror. Holding up the mirror is the first step; keenly weighing what one sees, fitting each glance into a total view, and taking steps to improve the picture—all these are subsequent steps in objectivity.

A few communities will not even look in their mirrors. Many communities do not possess the ability and know-how to use a mirror or the mental attitude to make use of what they see.

The church, as an agent for causing objectivity, cannot be a neutral. Objectivity and neutrality are "brother-words" but not identical twins! Where the church has objectivity it has respect and thus influence on its community; where it is bigoted, one-eyed, it fails to exert a broad ministry.

Last, the element of coordination. The local church is a pivotal institution. The whole of life turns rhythmically on it—from birth, to baptism, to marriage, to death. One only needs to recall that many fields of study had their early roots in the church. Music, art, philosophy, even medicine were nourished at her bosom.

Somehow the local church, by neglect or ignorance, has sacrificed its role of community coordinator. At times it has relegated itself to a role which today cannot possibly affect the fabric of total community life as it did in early days. In some places, it has become the fringe; in other places, the powder and rouge which cultured people apply to beautify themselves. To recapture that pivotal nature of the church is to make it again the power that shaped our world, the steady impact for good.

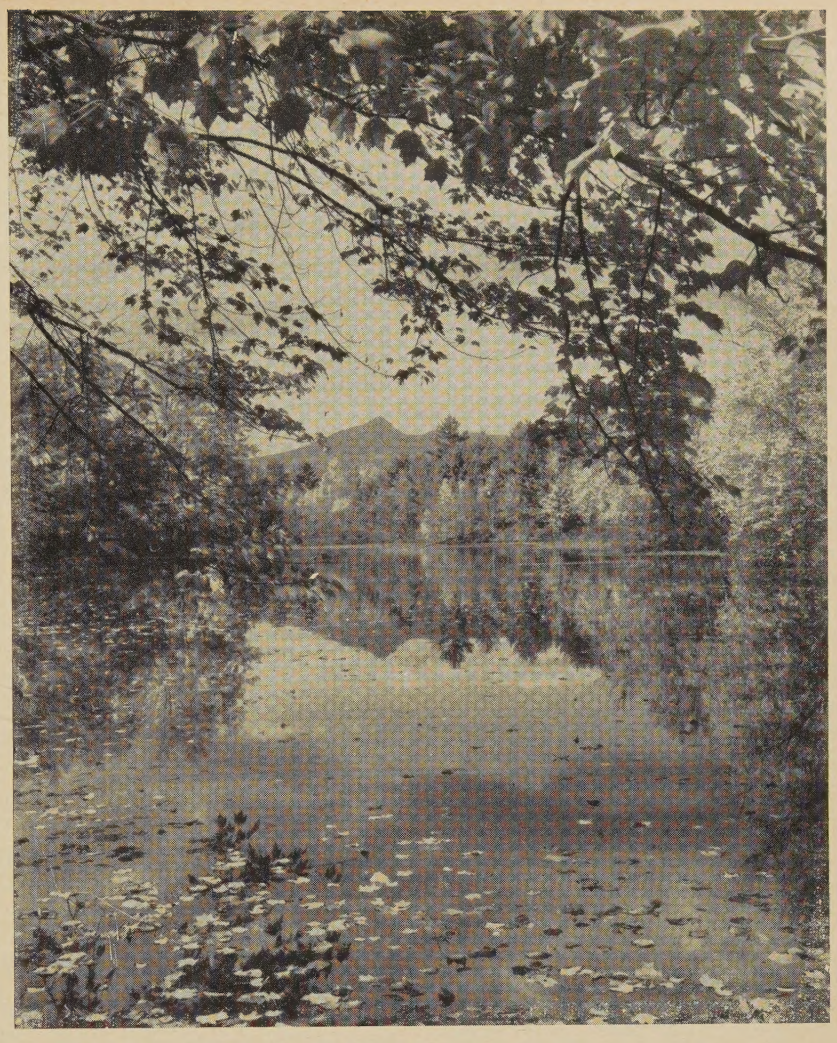

Photo by Winston Pote from A. Devaney, N. Y.

Conclusion

The plight of small communities and urban alike demands that the church intelligently and aggressively become dedicated to improving local life. The broad ministry of the church should be applied to (1) Strengthening leadership, (2) Encouraging community objectivity, and (3) Facilitating the coordination of the community's total resources. The dynamic church can condition the community so that it is a fertile, rich place for Christian growth. The Timid Giants and Sleeping Workmen are no match for the problems which communities face today. Their glad tidings are diminished chords which, without accompaniment, play a spiritless melody.

Prayer For Congregations With Vision

We thank thee, O God, that thou dost grant to some the eye to see far horizons of accomplishment. Especially do we thank thee for those members of churches who have a vision of better things in church and community.

We pray for the triumph of their hopes. Grant them the gift of realism so their visions may be more than idle dreams. Open their minds to thoughts of others until the goals they envisage become the goals of many.

May ideals be matched with patience, courage with tenderness, and zeal with endurance.

Mark Rich

Baptist Church in Iowa Wins Certificate of Merit

• Annual certificate of merit awards are made jointly by the Iowa Christian Rural Fellowship and the Cooperative Extension Service of Iowa State College. The purpose is to recognize the importance of vital religious programs and encourage the development of the church—community service relationships in town and country. Reports are submitted on a printed program planning guide and these are appraised by a committee of three judges.

Seventy-seven churches, in 47 counties were entered in the contest. Five of these, one in each of five membership groups were singled out to receive "awards of merit with distinction."

The First Baptist Church, of Hampton, Iowa, whose Pastor is the Rev. Warren G. Zinn, was awarded a Certificate of Merit with distinction.

This church reports "the best year the church has had for many decades. More members were added to the rolls, more people took an interest in all that was going on."

A Long Range Planning Committee has been appointed which is planning toward the 100th anniversary in 1964.

A Harvest Home Sunday and Share Our Surplus program was developed November 4, 1956 with an afternoon of fellowship at which a special offering yielded $238.00. The visitation evangelism program is underway, with a special group of lay workers making at least one call a month on prospects. A trip was made to the Tama Indian Reservation and materials are sent frequently to an Indian orphans' home.

The pastor is secretary-treasurer of the county ministerial association. Leaders participate in a community men's breakfast each Wednesday morning in a local restaurant.

The outstanding project of the year was The Union Vacation Bible School, in which three other churches cooperated. 320 pupils were enrolled and there were sixty-four teachers and helpers.

There were fourteen churches in the group from which this one was chosen.

HARVEST FESTIVAL
A Statement

• The celebration of "harvest home" is very old and has a place in the history of many peoples. The maturing harvest has inspired men to expressions of praise and thanksgiving which have found their way into religious services of all lands and faiths. The great Hebrew festivals had agricultural associations. The Feast of Unleavened Bread in the "month of earing" celebrated the appearance of ripening ears and the start of the barley harvest; the worshipper brought a sheaf of the new grain in consecration of the first-fruits. The Feast of Pentecost was the closing festivity of the seven weeks' joy of harvest. The Feast of Tabernacles in the time of the harvest moon was the crowning harvest festival, celebrating the ingathering of fruit, oil and wine.

Primitive folk festivals at harvest time combined with the Hebrew tradition under the auspices of the Christian Church to give England its joyous "Harvest Home" celebrations, Germany its "Erntedankfest" and Scotland its "Kirn." Pageantry, sports, singing, feasting and the comradeship of master, mistress and workers characterized these occasions and became the social and spiritual expressions of joy at the Harvest's end. The Pilgrims kept their day of thanksgiving on the shores of New England with feasting and religious exercises.

Some churches, like the Reformed, Lutheran, Mennonite, Moravian and Brethren, have continued to celebrate "harvest home," but in some other communions this practice has been all but abandoned, or the emphasis has been shifted to Thanksgiving Day in late autumn and the remembrance of national blessings, with but minor reference to the bounties of the harvest. This unfortunate trend has produced a nation of town and country churches in whose worship the references to seedtime and harvest are peculiarly lacking. No worship can, without losing vitality, remove itself from the ordinary pursuits of men. It is especially in connection with agriculture, where the mystery and providence of seed, soil and harvest are so evident, that this needs to be kept in mind.

The Harvest Festival may be held from August to November, but September and October are the most suitable months. It is best to keep it as a special day, apart from homecomings, anniversaries, rally days and annual meetings. Since decorations and offerings play such an important part in this festival, it must be held when suitable produce is available. The flowers, fruits, vegetables and other produce used as decorations and brought as thankofferings may be given to homes, hospitals and other charitable institutions, or they may be distributed among the sick and needy in the community. Cash offerings for missionary and charitable purposes may also be received at this time.

The annual Order of Service for a Harvest Festival is now ready for distribution. Designed for use by a congregation, it calls the attention of all communions, rural and urban alike, to the opportunities for religious experience and expression in services of thanksgiving and dedication at the harvest season. This year's leaflet was prepared for the Department of Town and Country Church by the Rev. Mark A. Dawber, former Executive Secretary of the Home Missions Council of North America (now part of the National Council of Churches), and at the present time pastor of The People's Church, Long Beach, New York. Dr. Dawber is an ordained Methodist minister.

This order of service may be procured from your denominational home mission board or from the Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., at the following rates: Single copies, 5 cents each; 100 copies or more, $1.50 for each 100 copies. Carriage extra on quantity orders.

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Contributors of articles to TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH speak for themselves and not for the National Council of Churches or sponsoring organizations.

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

The Village Church in West Pakistan

RICHARD O. COMFORT

• During my stay in West Pakistan (December 1956-April 1957) most of my time was spent in studying the native village churches, their characteristics, problems, needs and opportunities. I went there at the invitation of the West Pakistan Christian Council to coordinate a consultation on the village church. The West Pakistan Christian Council, which has its headquarters in Lahore, the capitol of West Pakistan, is made up of seven denominations: four Presbyterian; Methodist; The Church of India, Burma, Pakistan and Ceylon; and The Danish Lutheran Church. The Council functions in much the same way as the National Council of Churches does in the United States.

While I was in Lahore I visited seventy villages, and then I went to Gujranwala, forty miles north of Lahore, for the last month of my visit. There I taught in the United Theological Seminary, attended many committee meetings, and wrote the report of my work.

Characteristics and Problems

As in most countries, the village church in West Pakistan is usually small in membership. While some village churches have memberships of from 1,000 to 2,500, most of them have less than one hundred. Many pastors serve more than one church. Indeed, I met several who serve Christians living in as many as thirty-five villages. In a few cases these pastors have the help of one or more evangelists in ministering to the spiritual needs of their people. The pastors do their traveling by public bus or bicycle—I know of none who use a car. Few of the roads in the village areas are paved and often they are deeply rutted and full of loose sand. The best roads are those built along the canal banks—and these the government maintains.

The village church is usually limited in its financial strength. There are two reasons for this: 1) The average cash income of village Christians is less than $20.00 per month for a family of five members. Sometimes the family has a water buffalo which furnishes good milk, a few chickens, and a small garden to supplement the meager income. There are many, however, who have *no* land or livestock. These people live on a subsistence diet and have little equipment in their homes. Thus, the average village Christian has little money to give to the church. 2) The village church has not had a good program of stewardship education. Many people became Christians during the mass-movement days and have never had training in the Christian life. It is thought that they could give more to the church if they had the right motivation.

Another characteristic of the village church in West Pakistan is that many of the ministers have not had enough training or the right kind of training. Some denominations allow their students to enter seminary after finishing the eighth grade of school, while others require a high school diploma. A college degree is never required, although college study is often encouraged. The faculty and Board of the Union Seminary in Gujranwala realize that their curriculum has been limited and have taken steps to strengthen their program by adding a Department of Christian Education and a Department of Field Work.

The salaries of most ministers is low by our standards since many of them receive only seventy rupees a month ($15.00 in our money). The more highly paid pastors receive as much as from 250 to 300 rupees. Some of the denominations are considering the establishment of a minimum salary of 100 rupees (a little less than $25.00 per month), which is what many school teachers in that country receive. But East and West are much alike in one respect—many

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business and professional people receive higher salaries than ministers and teachers. In Pakistan, as in the United States, the village pastor usually has a manse or parsonage furnished, receives a few fees for professional services, and sometimes is given wheat and rice by his parishioners. I felt that village pastors in West Pakistan had more financial problems than most of the town and country pastors in the United States.

Then there is the problem of recruiting qualified and dedicated men for the ministry. In talking with college students about going to seminary and serving village churches I found that many responded to the challenge of a comprehensive program for the village church and in training for the ministry. They realize that much needs to be done to improve the program of the village church so that it will be able to serve the people and pay a living salary to the pastors.

One of the great needs is that of an over-all program for village churches. An interdenominational committee developed a set of Achievement Goals and these goals were discussed and adopted by 385 village pastors and 60 district superintendents who met in a series of conferences while I was in West Pakistan. This set of goals has nine major headings with 105 sub-headings. It has been translated into Urdu and is being used by village pastors to help them analyze their present programs and to establish goals for the improvement of the village church.

Opportunities

The village church in West Pakistan has many opportunities to serve the spiritual and physical needs of the village people, who make up 85 per cent of the population. The Christian community, although the largest minority in West Pakistan, constitutes only 1.3 per cent of the population. This includes about 350,000 Protestants and 100,000 Roman Catholics.

I visited seventy villages to discover the problems of the Christian people and discovered that they may be summarized as follows: 1) Unemployment; 2) Few schools; 3) Poor public health; 4) Few opportunities to develop a stronger spiritual life; 5) Adult illiteracy. One pastor summed it up this way: "Our people have poverty—poverty of mind, of body and of soul." The village church should understand this poverty and try to overcome it with the "abundant life" that Christianity brings to those who accept and practice it.

It is fortunate that in West Pakistan the Christian people are free to preach, teach, and live their faith in a Muslim land. Therefore, evangelism is one of the great opportunities of the Christian Church.

Soil Stewardship Week

• The Committee on Soil Stewardship Week for 1958, representing religious and conservation groups from all over the United States, met at the National Catholic Rural Life Conference headquarters in Des Moines, Iowa, June 14 and 15. The group met to plan the yearly observance of Soil Stewardship Week, set for May 11 through 17, 1958.

Pictured in a planning session are, left to right, front row: Henry S. Randolph, New York, representing the Town and Country Church Department of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.; Nolen J. Fuqua, Duncan, Oklahoma, president of the National Association of Soil Conservation Districts; Richard O. Comfort of New York, representing the National Council of Churches; and E. W. Mueller of Chicago, representing the National Lutheran Council. Standing, left to right, are Clair Guess, Jr., League City, Texas, program advisor for the National Association of Soil Conservation Districts; the Rev. Michael P. Dineen, Des Moines, Executive Secretary of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference; Dave J. Doneen of Farmington, Washington, Chairman of the Soil Stewardship Committee and representing the National Association of Soil Conservation Districts; and Bill Richards of Orleans, Nebraska, vice president of the National Association of Soil Conservation Districts.

Also attending the meeting but not pictured was Tarleton Jenkins, Fort Worth, Texas, representing the U.S. Department of Agriculture's soil conservation service.

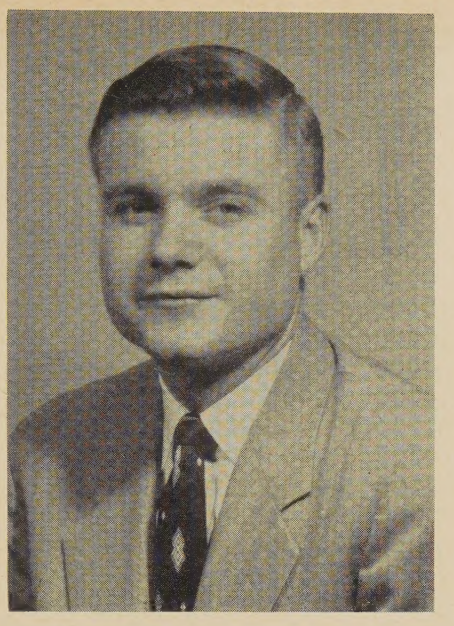
Committee on Soil Stewardship Week

Cumberland Selects Town and Country Minister of the Year

The Rev. Charles Faith has been lected to receive the honor of Town and Country Minister of the ear" for the Cumberland Presbyrian Church. At present he is the astor of the Marietta Cumberland resbyterian Church, Route 3, Conord, Tennessee. He served as stuent pastor of churches in Kentucky efore moving to the Marietta and irtue churches in the Knoxville resbytery, following his graduation om the Cumberland Presbyterian eminary in McKenzie, Tennessee, June, 1954.

Under Mr. Faith's leadership the arietta and Virtue churches were oved from part-time to full-time ograms. The Marietta church built manse in the Hardin Valley comunity at a cost of $12,500. Bus rvice was provided for the vacation urch school and for the Sunday orship programs. The Virtue church d a Lord's Acre program which tted $4,100, which will be used for ilding purposes. A new pastor has oved to the Virtue church, and r. Faith will devote his full time the Marietta church.

The president of the Hardin Valy Community Club says, "We ould be at a great loss without him our everyday life at home, at ork, in school, at church, at club eetings, and any place that he can of service." The president of the oyd Community Club says, "Mr. ith believes that the Lord's work not finished with the winning of uls to Chrst; and because of this, enthusiastically supports commuty improvement work." An elder the Marietta church says, "Our urch is well aware of Mr. Faith's adership in our local presbytery d synod, and our ambitious proam of growth at Marietta reflects s ability and initiative that is orthy of recognition. His untiring forts in community living, recreaon and goodwill, his services as out committee-man and his parcipation in our leadership training ogram in both the community and ur county are reflected in his many hievements."



Charles Faith

Some Basic Conclusions

RAYMOND W. MILLER

• As Consultant to the Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations I have observed at firsthand many of the high spots of the economics of the northern hemisphere. Through others I have learned much about the peoples and economics of the southern half of the world. As a result I have reached a few basic conclusions. They are given here for what they are worth.

1. All normal men have a religious faith of some kind.
2. Individuals are basically friendly the world over.
3. The family is the most important unit of society.
4. It is the small things that really count in life.
5. The eating of meals is the most important daily occurrence in a person's life in the midst of plenty.
6. More people go to bed hungry every night than with full stomachs.
7. Overpopulation is the result and not the cause of poverty.
8. "Decongestion" of metropolitan centers is the biggest industrial "must."
9. Most of the human race are farmers, fishermen, or foresters, and the majority of these are without the means and knowledge to do their jobs properly. Land reform measures are as a rule long overdue.
10. An extension service for primary producers is the common denominator to solve the problems relating to fields, fisheries, and forests.
11. The homestead laws, the establishment of agricultural and mechanical (land grant) colleges, the promotion of rural credit, extension services, and vocational work among rural and village students are the foundation upon which the American industrial and agricultural economy has been built. Without this type of assistance from the government our people would not have produced as they have or attained the standard of living which we enjoy.
12. The Point IV program is sound if put on an international basis with a balanced adjustment between American knowledge and the knowledge of other lands, combined through the specialized agencies of the United Nations.

—Reprinted from *Rural Missions*

A Migrant Mother's Prayer

Dear God, forgive me for wanting, but my children need food and clothes like the other kind. And, Lord, if you could I'd sure like enough beds, the boys keep catching cold from sleeping on the floor. Take care of us as we travel so as we can get to the next crop.

You've been good to us, Lord, and we thank you. Thanks for seven months of work last year and for helping Jimmy get over that pneumonia. If it isn't too much to ask, could we have friends in the next place? Amen.

Notes on Recollections

An Introduction

BENSON Y. LANDIS

• These notes are by one interested in by-paths rather than main highways, by one who has found more significance in and around dirt roads for barefoot boys and geese to walk upon than in and around Washington or New York. They are by one with a shameless interest in things associated with the use of the pen, in the literature of rural life, for example; in the writings of mystical poets as well as those of social scientists.

They are by one who has often earned his salary in something called research, but actually one with an interest in interpreting and reviewing social and religious research. There has been a closely related interest in the processes of adult education; and in a series of social movements, e.g. the cooperatives throughout the world.

Requests that I write also about national affairs and the national government also appeared. I approached this as a careful observer, as a generalist who picked the minds of specialists before he wrote. I have often been studying the world for the churches, but inevitably I have also studied the churches and religion. I must also reveal that for some years I have read both the *New Yorker* and the *Rural New Yorker*. I have an interest in urban life, too, and that inevitable appendage, the suburb, in which I have lived long of necessity but without deep satisfaction.

I was born a few years before the Twentieth Century opened, in an era which was one of a sort-of natural equilibrium. I was to live most of my life in an era of upheaval, one of the great upheavals of history, which began with the opening of World War I, in the summer of 1914.

I was born, October 12, 1897, on a farm near Center Valley, Pennsylvania. My parents were born on farms but were not farmers. My father, Myron S. Landis, soon left the farm to become a railroad telegrapher and a member of a railroad union. My grandfather, a farmer, paid for my father's apprenticeship, so that he might seek employment off the farm. I was thus a part of the national trek from farm to town.

Most of my childhood and youth were lived in the then rural village of Coopersburg, Pa., which was close to the farm of my paternal grandfather. If I had no farmer's team of my own, I was at least to see innumerable teams go by our house, and the farm was close enough to me to enable me to help in the haying and picking potatoes, etc., etc. As I now reflect upon it, that farm had a subtle and pervasive influence on my whole life. I do not think of "the family farm" without thinking about this one farm. When I rise to defend family farms in discussions, I suspect I am still defending that farm.

I lived across the street from the country store, where men sat and talked a great deal. It was mainly the village men who came to discuss of an evening. At times I listened to lively discussions of politics and national affairs, of the price of butter, of the growing popularity of breakfast foods and other processed items. I heard men deplore the rise of shredded wheat and the impending decline, so they said, of oatmeal. To this store came people with their eggs to trade and with their kerosene cans.

My Home Town

I lived in Coopersburg, Pa., from 1904 until 1919. I recall 1904 particularly because of the Presidential Campaign. The town was usually Democratic, something a bit unusual for the rock-ribbed Republican state. I was urged by my Republican father to wear a Teddy hat, and to yell "Hurrah for Teddy," when I passed the general store near our home. As I recall it, I obeyed, and was rewarded.

In 1904 there were kerosene street lamps, and each evening the official lighter, employed by the borough, came about sundown to put a match to the wicks. In Coopersburg I went to the public schools, where, in those days, we called our teachers Miss Carrie and Miss Alice, rather than Miss Jordan or Miss Kern. Our classes were large, but our teachers were devoted people who loved children and loved to teach. They must have had this love for us, or they would not have carried on with relatively poor equipment.

Very early I became interested in baseball, both in my home town, and in Philadelphia, which was forty-six miles south of us. I became a supporter of Connie Mack and his Athletics, partly because my father communicated his enthusiasm to me. I began to read about baseball and many other things in a really fine newspaper, the Philadelphia *North American*. It contained for many years a daily column, The Optimist, written by Leigh Mitchell Hodges. Once Mr. Hodges asked his readers to submit the six books then valued most highly. I replied promptly, and he published my list along with those from four or five others that made a prompt response. Our names were not printed, which was a disappointment.

On the school playground and elsewhere I practiced baseball whenever I could. Why I developed an interest in first base, I do not know. Perhaps it was because I was tall when young, and thus had a long reach, which was a great asset, when it came to catching the throws of some of our boys who played the other bases. At any rate, I became a first baseman.

We had three churches in our town, that is, three congregations and two buildings. The largest church was the old type union institution of Eastern Pennsylvania, where the Reformed and Lutheran congregations shared the building and had a union Sunday school. My father was a Lutheran, so I went to this Sunday school. There I also had devoted teachers who struggled with

he "quarterlies" of their day. Sunday school was a place where a number of good people went through lessons and gave some of their experience to the boys and girls.

When I got to high school and college, I was sometimes called upon to be a substitute teacher in the Sunday school. I remember preparing most carefully for a class of boys, so that I might hold their attention. Soon I became their regular teacher. I learned much from them.

The other local church was the Moravian, which was to loom large in my career later on. This was a small congregation, and in the early years was known as a home mission congregation. I had no interest in it until 1911, when a new minister arrived who, of all things, was interested in baseball and in boys playing baseball. At a baseball practice I met Edmund de S. Brunner, and learned that he had been a pitcher on the Moravian College nine. He was ready to have a catch with boys on many occasions. He let it be known that he was willing to play baseball on the town team. This caused consternation, and considerable discussion, in his church. There was some opposition but generally an attitude of tolerance and amusement. That, I thought, spoke well for the Moravians.

When I had developed sufficiently, I wanted to play on the town team, and I had my opportunity. Time came when I was elected captain, even though I was the youngest member of the team. That brought with it responsibilities. One had to make decisions, and sometimes one had to change pitchers. My recollection is that every other player received my suggestions with good grace. This is intended as a tribute to them for their patience with me.

My home town was Pennsylvania Dutch. It had its retired farmers, which was supposed to make for a conservative attitude. It also had two factories, one in textiles, one in tobacco. At intervals I worked in both. My first job was as assistant shipping clerk in the hosiery mill. Here I learned how to pack crates, make up packages of various sizes, and meet delivery deadlines. The hours were long, the pay small. But I lived at home and often saved a bit of money, which helped during my college days.

To be continued in the next issue

Methodists Hold Rural Institute in Missouri

• A Rural Institute for selected church and conference officials of the St. Louis Conference of the Methodist church was held January 29-30, 1957, in the Fredericktown, Missouri Methodist church. Resource personnel included Dr. Glenn F. Sanford, Superintendent of Methodism's Department of Town and Country Work, and Dr. Herbert H. Brower, state director of Methodist Rural Work in Missouri. In spite of a severe ice-storm thirty of the forty-two delegates were present along with a number of visitors.

The Rev. Dan Schores, pastor at Cabool, Missouri and secretary of the Town and Country Commission which sponsored the Institute, began by presenting a preliminary report of a current parsonage study. Information from questionnaires on 200 of the 208 charge and district parsonages was summarized with discussion following to help the commission determine a grading and standardization policy for all conference parsonages. The latter will be done in cooperation with the Conference Board of Lay Activities.

Detailed reports from two representative rural districts, Poplar Bluff and Rolla, were presented to give insight to problems, statistical trends and future possibilities. Dr. Brower brought out parallels in the conference and state. Dr. Sanford then led in an intensive study and discussion of these problems and brought out solutions which could be applied to the entire conference. Better trained leadership (lay and clergy), rethinking of our traditional ideas of a pastor's responsibilities, the Group Ministry, new charge arrangements, dedicated rural leadership, and adequate program were pointed out as major needs. During the closing session three study groups met to decide on positive solutions in the areas of "Charge Arrangements," "Program," and "Leadership." These groups then reported back to the larger group. Several of the districts are planning similar institutes on a district basis to bring more of the information to local churches and their leaders.

Delegates included the bishop, district superintendents, heads of all conference organizations, district presidents of the Woman's Society, a layman and two pastors from each district besides the members of the Town and Country commission.

Cumberland "Church of the Year"

• The Tusculum Cumberland Presbyterian Church, near Nashville, Tennessee, has been selected as the Town and Country Church of the Year of its denomination by the Board of Missions and Evangelism of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The selection is made on the basis of outstanding progress. The improvements in the program activities of the local church, the addition and improvements in the buildings and grounds, and the community out-reach of both the pastor and the church were so outstanding as to merit the reception of this award.

The presentation of the award was made to the pastor and representatives of the congregation on Sunday evening, June 23, at a special service of the General Assembly meeting at Evansville, Indiana.

The Rev. James W. Dancer is the pastor.

Studying Wildlife

Wildlife is such a topic,
It has birds and bees galore,
From way up north to every tropic
And in lots of Indian lore.

Prairie dogs are a mystery;
Blue Jay high in that old tree,
Reaches back to ancient history.
Fish of ocean and of sea—

That wild flower in your yard,
Many years ago came,
Conservation is its life-guard.
Help keep wildlife just the same!

JOSEPH S. HEARTBERG, JR.

Making Use of the Community Religious Census

LONNIE H. HASS

Analyzing a Community Religious Census

• Many communities are enthusiastic while they are making a Community Religious Census, but are disappointed later because sufficient thought was not given to the best use of the gathered information.

When the schedule or information sheet for gathering census material is prepared, careful consideration should be given to the type of information desired and the use that will be made of it. The form can be tested on a few families to see if it gathers the information for which it was designed. If the census schedules prepared by the National Council of Churches of Christ or the denominational offices are used, pretesting has already been done. The Department of Town and Country Church of the Disciples of Christ has developed its own "Town and Country Church Census Blank" by using the National Council of Churches' form with a few additional questions, such as occupation, residence in the community, farm and home ownership, race, and nationality. This form was the one used in making census surveys in Indiana.

Purpose

The principal purpose of the census taken in Rocklane, Indiana was to find the unchurched individuals and families of the community. After the census was completed, information was separated, typed on 3" x 5" cards, and filed for future evangelistic work. Girls who had taken typing in high school were able to do good work with some supervision. When this work was finished, the sheets were returned to the general files. Separating prospective members was a considerable task, for in some communities the unchurched equaled the current membership of the churches.

The next step was to determine where the people, including the unchurched, lived in the community. Map tacks, a color for each church, were used on a large map of the community. White tacks were used to indicate the families with no church home in the community. Such a graphic study will give other important information, such as the location of a church building in relation to its membership, new areas developing, and sections that are unchurched.

Further use of the map was made by indicating where families attend church and the direction of travel of those who work out of the community.

A tabulation of occupation was made and charted. Tabulation of the question on duration of residence in the community followed a similar pattern. Two facts emerged from this study: if a large group of present residents took residence before 1900, the community was likely to be conservative and resistant to change. If a large group become residents after the last war, the future of the community had great potential. Both conditions have been found in Indiana surveys. Such facts are important to church program planning.

The religious preference chart was popular. Everyone was interested in the percentages of people who prefer certain churches. The number and percentage of "non-church" always comes as somewhat of a shock. The question arises as to what the basis of this tabulation should be—actual membership, church constituency, or the responsibility role. It can be done on any of the three; but, if it is based on the church's community responsibility, then the study gives an indication not only of the present, but also what the church may become through effective program.

As the final step in the census analysis, an age-group study was made and charted. A tabulation sheet was set up along the conventional church groupings, 0-4, 5-9, 10-15, 16-19, 20-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65 and over. These were further divided into male and female, and each individual was tallied in the correct column. Any column divided by the total tabulation gave the percentage of that age group. Separate studies were made for both the church and the community. By mounting these alternately on a chart, a running presentation was given of the effectiveness of the church with any age group in the community. This study showed such facts as the number of children in relationship to the adults, the per-

ntage of young people leaving the mmunity after high school gradu-ion, the percentage of the aged, d similar information.

Local people were used through e census tabulation. Work sched-es were set up from 10-12, 2-5, and) each day during the tabulation. he workers saw the problems and portunities as the census unfolded d became staunch supporters of its dings.

The ministers and other church ders met at the close of the census alysis and divided the cards ac-rding to denominational prefer-ces. Duplicates were made where e family preference was divided. ch minister took his cards with m for further use in his church's ogram. In one community, the en-e file of census forms was placed the local library for reference and ed by any authorized group.

A set of charts, 25" x 30", present-g the findings gleaned from the nsus, was prepared and mounted r use by the churches in present-g the information to various oups in program study sessions. he opinion grew among the work-s that the charts and forms should preserved so that the results ight be compared with future cen-s efforts.

Kansas Church Wins Award

HENRY A. McCANNA

Out on the vast and verdant ains of western Kansas a gem is to found. This Gem is a small farm-g village just off U.S. highway 24, n miles east of Colby, Kansas. It is place of value because of a shining irit; a spirit which has found ex-ression through a building—a urch building. Often the beauty a single jewel is not fully seen cause it is set in the midst of other wels. Because the life of these ople centers in their church, the illiance of this gem is revealed. em is small in business operations t is great in spiritual service.

One hundred fifteen resident embers obtained $100,000.00 to ect their church building. In three ore years there will be no debt. ch giving is not for show or luxury but a demonstration of inspired dedication. The money was not secured at the expense of mission giving; for this church has consistently been near the top in per capita mission giving of the Baptist churches in Kansas. The present budget calls for the raising of $14,507.00 for the year. Included in the total cost of the building is over $10,000.00 in donated labor. Worship is more meaningful when the building is not only a result of personal giving but a shared creation. This type of cooperation, which is evident throughout the village, continues in the present sharing of church responsibilities. An example of this sharing is seen in the different members who take turns playing the organ and piano. Not content to merely build for their own community, the men have been active in the construction of buildings at Camp Christy, Baptist Assembly grounds near Scott City, Kansas.

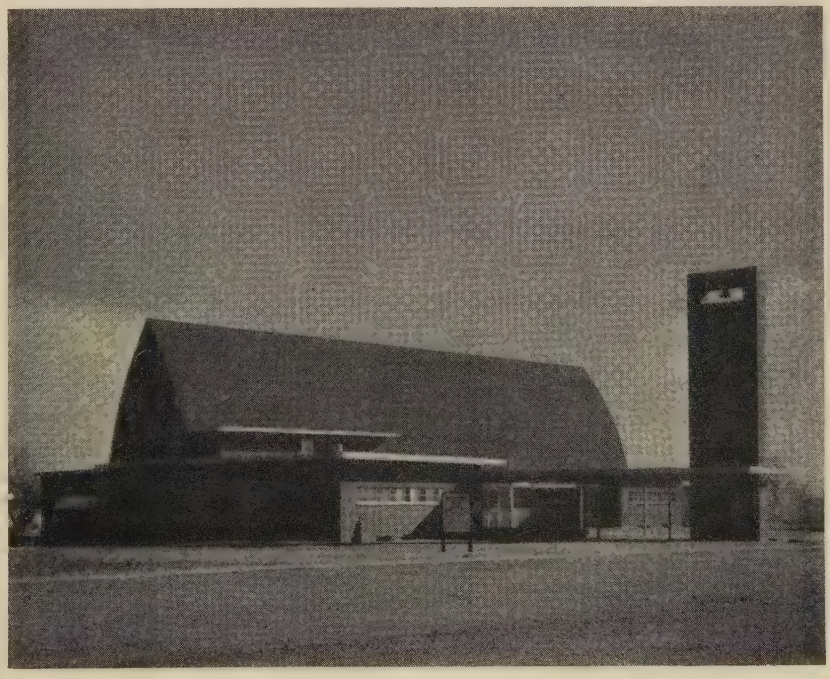
The First Baptist Church building is not only a worthy structure but symbolizes the qualities of greatness found in the people who worship therein. Architecture should and probably does, express the personal beliefs and convictions of a people. The first and most lasting impression made by this building is that the religion of these people is related to life—even the life of the democratic public school. The structure is not a monument to the past faith of others but is a functional expression of present faith and action.

The inviting, bright, friendly glassed-in narthex characterizes these people.

The raising of wheat is the central livelihood of the folks at Gem. Wheat has a simple beauty and color, and it is fitting that one is reminded of wheat as he enters the nave—another evidence of the relation of religion to life.

Though not so evident from the exterior, the soaring height of the nave awakens aspiration. This same aspiration is evident as one looks into the humble faces of these Christian farmers. The pastors who have served this congregation since 1901 have been aware of this vision and have contributed to the increase of its brightness. The average length of service by the pastors has been five years, as was true of the Reverend Dwight Neville, during whose ministry the present building was constructed. The Rev. William Harris, a senior at Central Baptist The-

(*Continued on Page* 12)



First Baptist Church at Gem, Kansas

(*Continued from Page 11*)

ological Seminary, has been called.

Looking toward the chancel the impression is one of balance; even the living plants over the baptistry and under the cross are a reminder that Christ died, but also rose again.

Particularly attractive are the wholesome young people who are being developed in the Christian way. The church demonstrates concern for higher education by providing scholarships at Ottawa University, the Baptist school in Kansas. For several years this church has received the American Baptist Achievement award for educational excellence.

The social area of the building is adaptable for worship, education, and/or recreation, and again portrays the concept of an enlarged ministry. Fellowship should be evident in every phase of the church program and it is at Gem.

The old church building is yet fulfilling useful service in that it has been given to the village of Gem for a social hall.

A rich heritage, devoted leaders, cooperation, informality, fellowship, democracy, solidarity, sacrifice, projects, community and world-wide concern, love for the land, and above all love for God—these are the facets of the people who are the First Baptist Church of Gem, Kansas — Central Baptist Seminary's choice of the outstanding Rural Baptist Church for the year 1957.

Church by Mail

• Hundreds of Episcopalians in Maine's most remote areas now have their church and Sunday school right in their own mail boxes.

The Rev. Daniel K. Sullivan, 29 years old, says his "Church School by Mail" has almost 200 parishioners so far, "and at the rate we are growing, we may have more than 1,000 before the year's over."

"Father Dan," ordained in his local parish a year ago, spends one day a week in Portland handling his heavy church-by-mail correspondence. Some recipients have written the priest that his material is the only mail they ever receive.

Cooperative Parish in Western Minnesota

ROBERT W. THATCHER

• Take ten small rural churches with depleted Sunday evening services and tottering youth groups and you have a discouraging situation. But take these same ten small rural churches and have them cooperating once a month in an evening service and once a quarter in a fellowship for young people and you have an encouraging situation.

This is just what happened about seven years ago in western Minnesota. The Evangelical United Brethren churches of Norcross, Taylor, Tenny, and Western; the Presbyterian churches of Doran, Lawrence, and Western; the Congregational churches of Campbell and Tintah; and the Baptist church of Campbell joined to share in an evening service once a month and in a youth fellowship at least once in every three months. The Western Minnesota Cooperative Parish is an interdenominational venture in cooperative Christianity. It has as its motto, "Cooperation begins where Christian love begins."

Parish Council

The ten churches of this parish are within thirty miles of each other, although they are in four different counties. Once every three months the pastor and two lay persons from each church meet—these form the Parish Council, which is the administrative body of the Cooperative Parish. One of the pastors serves as Executive Secretary; he, in cooperation with the council, handles most of the business of the parish.

Any church may become a member of the Parish, subject to the approval of the Parish Council. Application for membership must be made by vote of the congregation seeking admission. A church that becomes a member of the Parish does not surrender any of its prerogatives —it retains its pastoral relations, its organizations and governing bodies, its organized life and desired activities. Cooperation with other churches remains a voluntary matter.

The purposes of the Western Minnesota Cooperative Parish are:

1. To provide intra-parish fellowship and cooperation;
2. To facilitate social, educational and religious work within the churches of the Parish;
3. To sponsor and direct the activities within the Parish so as to extend and deepen the Christian convictions of the parishioners and to make more effective their contributions to the work of the Kingdom of God through the church at home and abroad.
4. To use its influence in order to secure adequate leadership and ministry for the Parish.

Opportunities

Besides the cooperative evening service once a month, when speakers and programs are presented that the individual churches could not secure by themselves, there are other activities. The young people have roller skating parties, summer picnics, banquets, and other cooperative fellowships. Once a year all the churches combine for a morning worship service beside a lake. This is usually followed by a picnic. Occasionally the pastors of the Parish exchange pulpits for a morning worship service.

The churches of the parish realize that this is only the beginning of what can be done. Women's work could be done together. A Men's fellowship could be formed. Cooperative social action could be developed. When small rural churches of different denominations learn to cooperate there is much that can be done for the Kingdom of God.

• One of the purest and most enduring of human pleasures is to be found in the possession of a good name among one's neighbors and acquaintances.

—CHARLES W. ELIOT

The Little Red Hen*

HAZEL B. CORLISS

The present position of the poultryman, in the Northeast, may be likened unto that of "The Little Red Hen" of nursery fame. The duck, goose, cat and pig all refused to help her plant the grain of wheat; but they were most eager to share the harvest! However, having done all the work, she decided to eat the bread herself!

For some time the adverse market has been preying upon all poultrymen, both large and small, so that their continued existence is as uncertain as a hen with its head cut off. The situation is the result of overproduction.

The big poultryman is honking loudly that his business will soon be a "gone goose" unless the small producer is given a "dose of duck shot," and speedily brought down to earth. The independent man has given many years of mental and physical effort to building up his business.

Squawking like a ruffled hen, the big farmer insultingly accuses the little fellow of being inefficient. I know from experience that, on a small scale, it just isn't humanly possible for the small farmer to be as efficient as the big one who has acreage and every modern device at his command. The small farmer is not necessarily inefficient.

The agricultural advisers tell the small poultryman that, if he wishes to survive, he must expand. Scratching away at their appointed teaching tasks, like the Little Red Hen clucking to her chicks, they tell him that if he will just be efficient, he can soon grow big and strong, too. If he does, he will only add to the existing surpluses.

The experts said sometime ago that the poultry industry had "come of age." I believe that efficiency has also come of age, and that more emphasis should be placed upon unity, marketing and distribution. Time and talents should be diverted to helping the farmers to unite and cooperate in finding new ways to sell, and a fair way to cut back their overproduction. Instead, many continue clucking, "It is the survival of the fittest!" Who is qualified to judge between the fit and the unfit?

In the days when the Little Red Hen was queen of the farmyard, a man's success was measured by his personal integrity and industry, not by the size of his business. Big or little, the honest, hardworking man was both respected and admired. The world urgently needs less stress on efficiency and more on human relations and moral values.

Pig-headedly, the big poultryman does not offer to cut back his own production for the good of the industry. Instead, he squeals loudly that the bigger the business the greater the loss. Yet, like "the widow with her mite," no man can give more than his *ALL*. Many of the older small producers have devoted a lifetime to superior poultry farming.

My husband has what is known as "chicken sense," and was thus more "fit" than most beginners. Taking a "gander" at our eleven years here, we have survived two poultry squeezes only by his working out while I did the farm chores. We both worked from dawn to dusk daily. There were two winters when he was unable to find work at all—we couldn't find any small change, even under the bureau! As in most rural areas, jobs are scarce, poorly paid, insecure and distant. Because of his age, the older man isn't wanted, not even by the shorthanded big farmers. At first, we had 1500 meat birds and 300 layers. Last Fall, I suffered a breakdown from overwork. So we sold all but twenty pullets for our own use. Even though we have remained free, it will still take us months to pay our indebtedness.

Unlike the Little Red Hen, the modern Northeastern poultryman cannot plant and process his own grain as his terrain is largely hilly and rocky. The Western poultry farmer, with vast stretches of level tillable land, has a great advantage. The Eastern farmer has to pay higher taxes for grain supports, in addition to transportation costs. He takes still another "ducking" competing with Western and Canadian eggs that are shipped East in cold weather, seriously damaging our native markets. In spite of this unfairness, he has still been proud of helping to maintain a free market for the industry.

Grunting away at their sales promotion tasks, the Producer Associations and Cooperatives have done a great deal to help the poultry farmer "bring home the bacon." So the trouble does not lie in "under-consumption" of either eggs or poultry meats.

Due to its continual fluctuation, the poultry industry has usually been considered a poor risk by most credit concerns. So the firms allied to the industry have made money available for expansion. To contract buying, most older men have likely said, "Don't be a goose." But since it is so difficult nowadays to get started in farming, the young man thinks he can easily "feather his nest" with a few "down" payments. He has yet to learn that those who have the most money in any venture will surely "rule the roost," and he will become merely a hired man.

In foreign countries, America is looked upon longingly as the land of opportunity. The hungry and homeless refugees, being welcomed here in large numbers, are deserving of our aid. Yet, I believe that many of the older farmers, both poultry and dairy, who are being ruthlessly pushed out, become more or less displaced persons in their own country. No thought is being given to their welfare. The majority have no other skills, no built-up "Social Security" benefits, no job opportunities, and often no reserve funds.

Like the tailor with his goose, this trend toward "bigness," and the re-

(*Continued on Page* 15)

* This article was sent to the editor last February, but, due to a full printing schedule, could not be included in TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH before this issue.

Pastor is Earthworm Expert

BETTY WESTROM

• It's not too uncommon for a pastor with a yen for gardening to spend these early spring days perusing the seed catalogues and making plans for the year's flower and vegetable crop.

But the Rev. Willis Yarian, who serves St. John's Lutheran Church near Fort Wayne, Indiana, has been making preparations all winter. There is never a time when the pastor and his family don't give at least part of their hours to the raising of earthworms.

The pastor first became impressed with the soil-building activities of the lowly earthworm during his boyhood on the farm. He had observed how the common earthworm processes the soil, extracting from it such organic materials as manure or garbage and passing these materials through its own body, adding its own secretions. The earthlike "castings" which are thrown off are a fine, natural plant food.

Pastor Yarian wanted to grow better vegetables in his parsonage garden, and an article on the raising of earthworms stimulated his interest. He wrote to the paper and ordered 1,500 worms. The local library provided the information on the raising of worms, and the Yarians began the project in earnest.

A Quiet Beginning

At first the thing was pretty "hush-hush," because they wanted to see if there would be any actual real value. After using the castings for awhile the pastor and his wife decided that the results were worth the effort. Soon their friends received the castings, and they in turn told their friends about the results.

Commercializing on the hobby was not the pastor's aim, but soon friends convinced him that he had the makings of a good commercial sideline, so he placed an ad in the Flower Grower. Bags were purchased, labels printed, and mailing cartons ordered.

Soon the entire family got into the act—counting worms, packing castings, and working the lug boxes. The boys like to sell the worms for bait.

Pastor Yarian "turns loose" many of his worms in the garden in the summer, letting them work up the soil, thus providing additional fertility.

Two Methods Used

Two methods of producing castings and growing worms are used by the Rev. Mr. Yarian. One or two outdoor pits are used the year around, while wooden "lug boxes" and oil drums in the parsonage basement provide winter breeding and growing space.

The outdoor pits go down about three feet below ground level. When a pit is started, it is filled with a compost of peat moss, dirt, and manure. Garbage is also added to the mixture. Women of the church have formed the habit of contributing the refuse from church dinners to the compost.

Each spring the top few inches of the pit contents, with most of the worms, are removed and the pit cleaned out. Most of the material below the first few inches is castings.

The Lug Boxes

In the winter, the lug boxes are the breeding spot. About 500-600 grown worms are placed in each box, which is filled with dirt and covered with a piece of cloth. Water is added every few days along with some chicken mash. About 16 boxes are kept going at one time.

About every seven days, each breeding worm produces a tiny "capsule" from which will hatch about 25 worms. Every three weeks each box is "harvested" and the capsules are removed, just before hatching. The breeding worms are placed back in the lug boxes, while the capsules are placed in oil drums. There is fresh dirt in the drums, so that the newly-hatched worms will have "working ground."

The lively little earthworm enterprise has proved to be a relaxing hobby for busy Pastor Yarian and his family, but the pastor also approaches his various gardening enterprises with a genuine sense of stewardship.

"I believe rural congregations should have more concern for beautifully landscaped property than they often do," he says. "There is also room for much improvement in their homesteads. Work for beauty has a proper place in a farmer's appreciation for God's blessings, rather than using all energies for just cash crops. This can be one expression of a living faith."

"Flowers become radiantly beautiful and blossoms take on a deeper color through our efforts, for with the earthworm we are working with God to give fertility in a natural way."

—Reprinted from *The Rural Lutheran*

Is There A Difference?

MARK RICH

• Occasionally I hear someone say that there are no longer any differences between country and city people. Now I would agree that people are basically the same; they are all made in the "image of God." Of course, there are differences in languages, customs, thought forms, out-look and ideals, which are determined by environment. Sometimes the isolation of rural people has differentiated them from their city cousins.

But now some of my friends say that through the miracle of communication and a spread of the amenities of modern life, we are all alike. The inference in ecclesiastical circles is that a minister trained for city church is thereby qualified for rural church work, for church work is alike in city and country.

I thought of these sentiments today when I attended the annual meeting of the Boone County Oil Cooperative. It was held in the heart of Columbia, Missouri, a city of over 40,000 population, where we met in the large social hall of the First Christian Church.

Anyone looking in would know at a glance that we were not Columbians, or urbanites from St. Louis or

ansas City. These were farmers, for ie most part. They came in colored irts, plaid shirts, and plain denim ork shirts. Though it was February iany did not wear ties. There were ot many more than half a dozen hite shirts in the crowd.

Very noticeable also were the rowned and ruddy faces, tanned as by the hot summer sun. These ere men, and a few women, of the ut-of-doors.

I think the verbal response was ower than it would have been in an verage city group; but the business as presented with dispatch. The esponse quickened as the hour adanced. By the time for adjournent, with coffee and doughnuts folowing, everyone was in a mood for uch talk.

The things these people talked bout were characteristic—farming, ral life, and farm organization. ot only were there references to oil ells, refineries, grease plants, but to rtilizer factories, to seeds and feeds, nd farm supplies.

Farm organizations galore were amed: the Missouri Farmers Assoation, the Missouri Farm Bureau nd the local store, the Farmers nion, Farm Bureaus in near-by ates, the Consumers Cooperative ssociation, the College of Agricul- ure, and others. Terms like parity nd government supports were apparently understood by all.

These people work with 4-H lubs, and the wives are in extension ubs. All were familiar with the exnsion agents and the various govnmental services. This was not the ind of talk one hears at city church atherings, or among business and rofessional men. A man has to live a certain environment to be miliar with it.

Here there seemed to be a sense f belonging to something big. Here ere entrepreneurs, independent perators, and men of business judgent joining together with traditional rural independence for their utual welfare. This kind of thing more difficult of achievement in e city than in the country. At ast, I've seen much more of it where eople have face-to-face contacts han in the larger places. Today's meeting didn't convince me that our rural and urban society are uniform like a seam of coal.

Those who work with rural people should at least recognize the quality of character and ability under tanned skin, and to be conversant with the interests and ways of life they represent.

BOOK REVIEW

World Religions: A Brief Guide to the Principal Beliefs and Teachings of the Religions of the World and to the Statistics of Organized Religion. By Benson Y. Landis. E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc. 1957. $2.95.

Anyone with an interest, either lay or professional, in religion or the social sciences will be wise to find a place on his shelf for *World Religions.* It will not take up much space, and as reference books go, it is undeniably a bargain.

Furthermore, it is distinguished by a rare objectivity and a still rarer lucidity. Its listed sources are sufficiently authentic to command the scholar's respect, although it avowedly makes no attempt at depth interpretation of theologies. Indeed, the author is wise enough to qualify his glossary of technical terms with a statement in the introduction to the effect that, though a layman, he is "enough of a student of the theologies of the world to realize that many ideas cannot be simplified...."

Recognizing the difficulty of arriving at a system of classification universally acceptable, Dr. Landis has here set down the beliefs and teachings, the history, and the available statistics of some forty religions in alphabetical order. In the introduction, however, he does offer for the guidance of the general reader a suggested classification, in which he lists eleven major groups. One of these is Christianity, embracing Anglican, Eastern Orthodox, Protestant, and Roman Catholic. The Protestant group takes in some interesting neighbors, not all currently members of the National Council of Churches; for example: Churches of the New Jerusalem (Swedenborgian); Unitarian; Universalist; Pentecostal; Spiritualist; Jehovah's Witnesses; Latter-day Saints (Mormons); and the Ethical Culture Movement.

A section on "Developments in Religious Bodies" reports the latest data on denominational mergers, on Christian-Jewish cooperation, on ecumenical movements, and on the ordination of women.

The idea for the book originated not with the author but with the publisher. E. P. Dutton and Company are to be congratulated on persuading Benson Y. Landis to undertake this difficult assignment. Not only is he eminently fitted for it by his native gifts and his position as Editor of Research Publications of the National Council of Churches; he is known and respected as well in the Roman Catholic and Jewish communities of the western world. His book should have wide use for many years to come.

LOUISA R. SHOTWELL

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sulting over-production, has the poultryman as well as the small dairyman "hard-pressed." As he stands in the gathering dusk of despair, let the farmer listen to the Little Red Hen, calling her chicks to slumber. She does not allow the smaller ones to be pushed out, but sternly makes room for all. If the farmers will join together under the protecting "wings" of true Brotherhood, they can help solve each other's problems. They cannot depend upon others to do it for them; like the Little Red Hen, they must do this work themselves. By so doing, they can eat their own harvest "bread." Let everyone unite to keep America a land of opportunity for all.

• REMEMBER . . . When you move, be sure to notify TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH of your new address.

National Convocation

On The Church in Town and Country

Under the Auspices of the Department of Town and Country Church, Division of Home Missions, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N.Y.

AMERICAN BAPTIST ASSEMBLY
GREEN LAKE, WISCONSIN OCTOBER 22-24, 1957

General Information

Who May Attend? You! If you are interested in the Town and Country Church. Ministers, ministers' wives, lay people, administrators of the church, religious educators, editors, officers of farm and rural community organizations, employees of civic and government agencies—all are invited.

To insure accommodations, the American Baptist Assembly requires an advance deposit of $2.50 per person, which is credited against the total bill for each guest. (This is not to be confused with the registration fee.) For full information regarding accommodations and transportation and the printed form to accompany your advance deposit, write to your denominational executive of town and country church work or to the National Council of Churches' Department of Town and Country Church for a Program.

To help carry the expense of the Convocation, a registration fee of $2.00 will be charged each person when he settles his account at the close of the Convocation.

OUTLINE OF PROGRAM

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22

Topic of the Day:
What is our World—in the Town and Country Church?

8:30 A.M. Opening General Session. Henry S. Randolph, presiding.
8:45 A.M. Worship Service, The Rev. and Mrs. Robert T. Frerichs.
9:15 A.M. *The Role of the Town and Country Church in a Changing World*—
James P. Warburg, Specialist on Foreign Policy and author of many books and pamphlets.
10:15 A.M. Recess
10:30 A.M. Group Sessions on the Topic of the Morning.

LUNCH

3:30 P.M. General Session—Group Reports on the Morning Sessions.

DINNER

7:30 P.M. Musical Program
8:00 P.M. Summation by the Morning Speaker, with Comments from the Floor
9:00 P.M. *The Voice of Scripture on the Day's Subject,* Russell Hoy, Methodist.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23

Topic of the Day: The Town and Country Church at Work on her World-Wide Mission

8:30 A.M. Worship Service, The Rev. and Mrs. Robert T. Frerichs.
9:00 A.M. *Address on Topic of the Day,* The Rt. Rev. William W. Horstick, The Protestant Episcopal Church.
10:00 A.M. Recess
10:15 A.M. Group Sessions on the Topic of the Morning

LUNCH

1:00 P.M. "Open House" at the Rural Church Center
3:30 P.M. General Session—Group Reports on the Morning Sessions.

DINNER

7:30 P.M. Musical Program
8:00 P.M. Summation by the Morning Speaker, with Comments from the Floor.
9:00 P.M. *The Voice of Scripture on the Day's Subject,* Russell Hoy

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24

Topic of the Day: Does our Community Reflect Christian Faith and Action in its World-Wide Witness?

8:30 A.M. Worship Service, The Rev. and Mrs. Robert T. Frerichs.
9:00 A.M. *Community Relationships in the World-Wide Mission,* Arthur E. Wileden, University of Wisconsin
10:00 A.M. Recess
10:15 A.M. Panel Discussion on Topic of the Morning: Joseph Ackerman; Marshall Harris; Harold W. Kleinpaste; Murray C. Stewart.
11:00 A.M. Summation: Richard O. Comfort, Executive Director, Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches
11:30 A.M. The Voice of Scripture on the Morning's Topic and Closing Service, Russell Hoy
12:00 M. Adjournment

Note: It is recommended that denominational sessions be held after the close of the Convocation—Thursday afternoon and evening, October 24.

Farmers Home Administration

• During 1956 the Farmers Home Administration made and insured loans totaling $336,480,000, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has reported. This is the largest volume of loans made in any one year. Previously the highest peak was in 1955 when approximately $281,000,000 was advanced to farmers.

The loans were used primarily for the operation, improvement, and purchase of family-type farms. The largest increase, approximately $40,000,000, occurred in the operating loan program which helps family-type farmers finance costs of equipping and operating efficient farming systems. Loans for the construction and repair of farm houses also accounted for a part of the increase. (The farm housing loans were not available in 1955.)

"The ability of the Farmers Home Administration to assist family-type farmers in the development of successful, well-balanced systems of farming was considerably strengthened in 1956 through amendments to its basic legislative authority," the Secretary of Agriculture, Ezra Taft Benson, has said. "As farm families continue to adjust and improve their operations we expect there will be a steady demand during 1957 for the supervised credit provided by this agency."

Collections of principal and interest during 1956 are estimated to be $292,500,000, compared to $281,500,000 for 1955. Loans outstanding as of December 31, 1956, are estimated at $885,000,000 compared to $821,000,000 as of December 31, 1955.

Approximately 226,000 farm families carried on their farming operations during 1956 with the aid of credit obtained through the Farmers Home Administration. Of this group 137,000 obtained loans during the year; the remainder were using credit obtained in previous years.